

2017 VINTAGE REPORT - VSPT WINE GROUP

"2017 WILL BE A YEAR FOR REDS"

For VSPT Wine Group and the country as a whole, the 2017 harvest will undoubtedly be remembered as a historic **early** one. This is because of high temperatures observed during the summer months in Chile's central zone, which caused the grapes to ripen faster than normal.

It was also a vintage of very **low yields**. This was due to poor fruit setting across most regions and varieties, further compounded by the effect of high temperatures on the weight of the bunches.

In general, if 2016 was a very good year for white wines, **2017 will be one of very high quality in red wines**. There is good concentration, intense aromatic expression and fine balance on the palate. Since few kilos of grapes were yielded per plant, the production of polyphenols, sugar and energy was concentrated across few bunches. As a result, the wines have an excellent color and aging potential.

If we take a journey across our vineyards from the northern **Elqui Valley** to the southern **Malleco Valley**, we can observe the following trend:

In the Elqui Valley, located 500 kilometers north of Santiago, the season was fairly normal because it was far removed from the high temperatures recorded in the central zone. Furthermore, because the vineyard lies in a coastal area (20 km from the sea), temperature variation is less during the day and variation is also less from year to year. As usual, harvest began with the base grapes for sparkling during the second week of February, coming to a close in the third week of May with the Syrah.

The early harvest was clearly observed in the **Leyda Valley**, where harvest began four weeks earlier than normal with Pinot Noir. The variety also produced low yields across the majority of valleys in Chile. With regards to Sauvignon Blanc, the quality was good, though acidity was slightly lower compared to 2016.

Harvest in the **Casablanca Valley** did not take place as early as in Leyda. We began 15 days earlier than normal during the second week of February. The variety most affected with low yields was Chardonnay, which had also been subjected to frosts during last spring.

In the **Maipo Valley** harvest of began at the beginning of March with Merlot, and some grapes were even harvested during the last week of February, one month earlier than normal. The harvest of Cabernet Sauvignon started between the second and third week of March, whereas historically it takes place during the first and second week of April.

In the central-south zone in the **Curicó and Maule Valleys**, harvest was brought forward on average three weeks. In **Cachapoal and Colchagua** it was early by 15 to 20 days, with the most affected varieties in terms of yield being Cabernet Sauvignon and Carmenère.

In summary, harvest dates were without doubt brought forward across the width and length of Chile. This required logistical efficiency for harvest and winery operations, once again hugely challenging our human team.

Another episode was the fires blazing in Chile over the summer. This put the whole Chilean industry in a state of alarm. Fortunately, the fires did not affect our own vineyards. However, we are deeply saddened by the profound losses that some historic vineyards suffered in the country.

Finally, we should toast for this new vintage, which we will undoubtedly learn new and valuable things from.